



Bulletin

of the Mahoning County Medical Society

January -February 2007

DOCTORS JOHN POLITIS AND SUDERSHAN GARG NAMED 2006 DISTINGUISHED PHYSICIANS

Doctor Sudershan K. Garg was named the 2006 Distinguished Physician by the Mahoning County Medical Society and presented with a plaque commemorating the honor at the Annual Meeting of the Society on Tuesday, January 23, 2007, at the Butler Institute of American Art. Presenting the award to Dr. Garg were Dr. Anand Garg and Dr. Chander M. Kohli, long-time colleagues and friends of Dr. S. Garg. Dr. Anand Garg said that he was going to provide the facts about Dr. Sudershan Garg's life and career and leave the "funnies" to Dr. Kohli.



Dr. & Mrs. Sudershan Garg

Graduating in 1962 from medical school in India and completing a three-year post-graduate doctorate, Dr. Garg came to the United States to train in hematology/oncology at Boston and N.Y.U., completing this training in 1971. He then worked as an attending physician at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in New York and the Hahnemann School of Medicine in Philadelphia. In 1975 he joined the staff of St. Elizabeth Health Center, heading the oncology/hematology program. He brought a special focus on cancer treatment to the community by providing "state of the art and compassionate care" for people afflicted with this malignant disease. Dr. Sudershan Garg has organized the annual cancer symposiums since 1977 to advance cancer awareness for the benefit of physicians and lay people in the community, and has brought many celebrities to the city to advance this goal. Dr. Garg is actively involved in student teaching and resident training, serving as an adjunct faculty member at Youngstown State University and clinical associate professor at NEOUCOM since 1977. He currently is serving a nine-year term on the Board of Trustees of Youngstown State University.

Dr. John Politis was presented with the *Distinguished Physician Award* posthumously, having passed away in November 2006. Dr. Riitha Kartan, who practiced with Dr. Politis, presented the award.



Dr. Riitha Kartan

Dr. Kartan described Dr. Politis, a native of Greece, as "the gold standard", instilling confidence by trusting the judgment of his students and colleagues. Dr. Politis graduated from Athens University Medical School in Greece. He served in the Greek Navy for two years, lived under a dictatorship for seven years and served as a local doctor for the villages in Greece. He came to America and did his internship at Northside Hospital and a fellowship at the Medical College of Wisconsin. He met and married his wife, Joanne, while he was a nephrology resident working with Dr. Robert Bacani. Dr. and Mrs. Politis have two children, Thelmos and Paula.

Dr. Politis was a pulmonary/critical care specialist in the Mahoning Valley for 27 years. He was a professor of medicine at NEOUCOM, served as the Chairman of the

Department of Internal Medicine and the Director of the Internal Medicine Residency program at Forum Health. Dr. Politis has been the recipient of 10 major teaching awards over the past 23 years. These awards included nine "Golden Apple Awards" for outstanding medical professor from the internal medicine residents, "Outstanding Teacher Award" from the family practice residents, and "Graduate Medical Education Award" from the professional staff at Western Reserve Care System, and this year he received the "Master Teacher Award" from the American College of Physicians. Dr. Kartan concluded her remarks by saying, "He loved the practice of medicine for both the ability to impact patient care and the intellectual challenge. He was devoted to his family as well as his patients, partners and the staff at Eastern Ohio Pulmonary Consultants. He is sadly missed by all of us whose lives he has touched."

Bulletin

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CALENDAR

March 30, 2007

*International Dinner,
Youngstown Country Club*

May 9, 2007

*Sixth District Spring Caucus,
Alliance Country Club*

May 18-20, 2007

*OSMA Annual Meeting,
Columbus*

May 31, 2007

*Electronic Medical Records Workshop
and Vendor Show, Antone's*

June 21, 2007

Annual OSHA Update, Antone's

June 22, 2007

Mahoning Valley Scrappers Family Fun Night

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From the President by Charles A. Crans, MD



As your newly-installed president, I would like to make this column a means of communication from me to the society at large. Remember, my comments are only my personal opinions, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Medical Society.

In this issue's President's Message, I would first like to introduce myself, and secondly, share with you an opinion dear to my heart.

I grew up in Braddock, PA, a small, previously steel suburb of Pittsburgh, attended "Pitt" School of Pharmacy and Medical School. I interned in McKeesport Hospital and did a surgical residency at the then-Youngstown Hospital Association, married my high school sweetheart, and we have five lovely, successful children.

I was drafted into the Navy/Marine Corps, and spent one year on the U.S.S. Sanctuary Hospital Ship in the South China Sea, off the coast of the Republic of Vietnam. I served as the director of the surgical residency program at Northside Hospital for many years, and as the chairman of the Department of Surgery for fourteen years. I made an effort to run the Department in a democratic fashion, with a council of surgery, and will make every effort to direct the Society in a similar fashion.

This brings me to my personal message of this column. I'm proud to be a physician, and have made every effort to disseminate this status to the people around me. I never cease to be frustrated to hear a successful physician advise "Don't go into medicine --- it ain't what it used to be". He's correct in some ways, but don't stand by and allow our profession to be downgraded. Stand up and be proud. Assault comes from all directions -- legal, federal, para-medical, nursing, and even from within medicine. Don't allow our noble profession to be further fractured by these outside forces as they try to usurp our domain. I say, if these people want to practice medicine, let them go to medical school as you and I did.

To paraphrase Emerson, "What lies within us is what truly matters". You are a doctor, not just another "health care provider". You are a physician deep to your very being, and need to support medicine in every way. Be proud to be called a doctor.

*Celebrate Doctors' Day at the
International Dinner
March 30th - Youngstown Country Club*

P 4 P



Quick, what is the single most common reason for treatment failure? Is it a lack of availability of a proper drug? Or is it that the drug is too expensive? Or perhaps we aren't smart enough to know what is wrong, or don't know the right dosage? (After all, we do make lots of mistakes, don't we, Mr. Betras?) No, it's none of the above. Compliance by the patient, or the lack thereof is the single greatest reason for success or failure of treatment for most issues we face with our patients, I think you would agree. This is true for the hypertensive, the obese, the diabetic, the asthmatic, and even the arthritic, with or without surgery.

Recognition of this fact is important, as we are being asked to consider acquiescing to yet another insurance scheme, known as Pay for Performance, wherein our reimbursement will be tied to outcomes. At first blush, it sounds great – I do good work, I get paid more. My guess is it will be more like – the patients I treat don't hit the insurers "quality indicators", I get paid less than I do now.

What is a successful outcome? By what measure is our work to be judged? Are patients "completely satisfied", like when their car is serviced? Is their blood pressure under better control? (Who is holding the manometer?) What is the range of motion of the knee after replacement? Just how patent is that LAD after angioplasty?

Any scheme can and will be manipulated by certain less scrupulous individuals, and I'm sure this can result in Profit for Proceduralists. As some scared or desperate physicians sign up for these plans, the insurers will Pick for Profit, and Push for Productivity. Since we often can't control outcomes in a situation of non-compliance, this is not a Panacea for Patients, and will more likely be a Pain for Participants, a Punishment for Providers and a Paradigm for Provocation.

In a free market, compliant patients and competent physicians will find each other, and both will thrive in a mutually beneficial relationship. The practice of medicine encompasses both algebra and poetry, but in this hyped up age of information, we are increasingly pressured to sacrifice the art upon the altar of statistics. The only thing that has and will remain constant in our profession, for thousands of years past, and those to come, is the relationship between patient and caregiver. This cannot and should not be objectified in the solitary interest of economics.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. S. Boniface MD". The signature is fluid and cursive.



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Office-Based PT Services Threatened

Office-based physical therapy services are under scrutiny in many states.

South Carolina recently became the second state to see its Supreme Court reinterpret an existing physical therapy statute and prohibit physician-owned physical therapy services.

It is just one of the first steps by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) to become independent from physicians. APTA is also using the Medicare Patient Access to Physical Therapists Act of 2005, as well as pushing for reinterpretation of physical therapy statutes in other states.

By 2020, APTA says, consumers and health care providers will recognize physical therapists as doctors of physical therapy, who will directly diagnose, treat and prevent musculoskeletal disabilities.

In a majority ruling, the South Carolina Supreme Court found that prohibiting physician-owned physical therapy services does not infringe on the practice of medicine or violate the equal protection rights of physical therapists who want to work for physicians. They noted that allowing such services in physicians' offices questions who is the primary beneficiary of physical therapy fees. The Court also noted the potential for financial conflicts of interest and the limitations for consumer choice in choosing a therapist – a major argument of APTA.

But state and national orthopaedic associations disagree. Two groups filed the original appeal to the reinterpretation. In an amicus curiae brief, the AAOS explained that prohibiting physical therapy services in physician offices could lower patient quality of care because orthopedic surgeons could no longer directly participate in the rehabilitation of their patients.

"There's no evidence at all that demonstrates that physical therapists as employees in an orthopedic surgeon's office offer quality of care that is any less or that there's any overutilization of that care," an AAOS spokesman said. "In fact, for patient convenience, there is a strong argument to be made. The position of our academy ... is that physical therapy in office as an ancillary service is completely acceptable and appropriate."

South Carolina orthopedists are troubled that the quality of care their patients receive from physical therapy will no longer be under their supervision. Not only has the ruling disrupted many of the physical therapists currently employed by physicians, but also it has unfortunately placed the state's physical therapists at odds with orthopedists in the state. In 2002, the Delaware attorney general issued an opinion to interpret an existing statute and effectively prohibit physical therapists from being employed by a physician and receiving referrals from a physician.

MCMS Immediate Past-president Ron Yarab, MD, feels that Ohio physicians should be on alert. "This is just one more example of 'paraprofessionals' encroaching on the practice of medicine", he says. "We must be vigilant to protect our patients and our practices."

NEW MEMBER

James F. Shina, MD

Internal Medicine

20 Ohltown Road
Austintown, OH 44515

Medical Education: NEOUCOM, Rootstown, OH
Internship: Forum Health, Northside Medical Center
Residency: Forum Health, Northside Medical Center

Bits 'n' Pieces

The following physicians have retired:

James E. Might, MD
Hira L. Khanna, MD
Maria L. Fok, MD
Antonio Gestosani, MD

Reema Taneja, MD has reinstated her membership

The following physicians have left the area:

Mehdi Soleimanpour, MD
Samer Siouffi, MD
Arlington Kuklinca, MD

Dr. Eduardo Velez (Calderon) has dropped membership

MEDICAL SOCIETY INSTALLS NEW OFFICERS

Charles A. Crans, MD was installed as the 134th President of the Mahoning County Medical Society during the Annual Meeting on January 23, 2007, at the Butler Institute of American Art. Dr. Crans, born in Braddock, PA, received both his Bachelor of Science degree and his medical degree from the University of Pittsburgh. He interned at McKeesport Hospital and completed a four-year surgical residency at the Youngstown Hospital Association. Dr. Crans served in the U. S. Navy where he attained the rank of Lt. Commander. During that time he served at the San Diego Naval Hospital, aboard the U. S. S. Sanctuary, Republic of Vietnam and Jacksonville Naval Hospital, Jacksonville, FL. Dr. Crans returned to Youngstown in 1969 and opened his private practice of general surgery, from which he retired in 2003. He served as Chief of Surgery of the Youngstown Hospital Association beginning in 1979. He and his wife Teresa have five grown children and reside in Canfield.

Other physicians who were elected and installed in the organization include: Dr. Micheal T. Engle, Secretary/Treasurer; Dr. Dean R. Ball, President-elect; Drs. Dean R. Ball, Eugene Potesta, and Chris A. Knight, Delegates to the Ohio State Medical Association; Drs. Raymond Duffett, Constantine G. Economus and Nazim Jaffer, Alternate Delegates to the Ohio State Medical Association; Drs. Vivian I. Starr, Charles A. Crans and Steven Scharf, Council members of the Society; and Drs. David Dunch and Norton German, Foundation Trustees.

EIGHT DOCTORS HONORED FOR 50 YEARS IN MEDICINE

Honored at the Annual Meeting were recipients of the Ohio State Medical Association 50-Years in Medicine Awards. Those recipients were J. James Anderson, MD; Frederick W. Dunlea, MD; Michael C. Galose, MD; Robert D. Gillette, MD; Douglas M. Goldsmith, DO; Joseph I. Gonzales, MD; Abdul Hafiz, MD; and Costas A. Sarantopoulos, MD. Doctors Dunlea, Galose, Goldsmith, and Gonzales were unable to attend. The awards were presented by D. Brent Mulgrew, Executive Director of the Ohio State Medical Association, to those present.



Brent Mulgrew & Dr. Anderson



Dr. Gillette



Dr. Hafiz



Dr. Sarantopoulos

My Puppet Regime has Fallen!

by Ronald M. Yarab, Jr., MD
Immediate Past-President

My reign as president of the Mahoning County Medical Society is over. This has been my second term as president, this time for a two year term. I have observed a multitude of events over the past 13 years of being on the council of the Mahoning County Medical Society. The most important thing that I've seen is great physicians in our county and state who are out there fighting for you every day, who go unnoticed and unappreciated. People like Dr. Dan Handel, who has been serving with the AMA and OSMA for decades; Marc Saunders and Chris Knight who have worked at the state level in the past and present. There are numerous other people who serve to make sure that the field of medicine is protected from further emasculation. These dedicated physicians and statesmen take time away from their practices to push your agenda. These people do the real nuts-and-bolts work of organized medicine. I have also seen that when physicians band together they are a powerful political force and can effect major changes on the legislative landscape.

Our county did a great job with the "Where Does it Hurt" campaign to raise awareness on rising malpractice costs, and in conjunction with this we elected a slate of candidates for the Supreme Court of Ohio to the bench to protect the tort reform legislation that was passed. We are now working to provide services to physicians to streamline practices and make use of the latest technologies to protect billing and patient information.

The downside is that there are not enough individuals involved in the process at this time. Of the over 280 active members in our society, we can barely hold a council meeting due to lack of attendance. Also, our quarterly society meetings see retired members outnumbering active members four to one with a total of 40 people showing up. That's damn embarrassing. Every year it is a struggle to find people to serve on council and nominating committees.

Physicians are the first to yell and scream when they hear of further Medicare cuts and other issues that will affect their livelihood, but they are the last when it comes to standing up and doing something about it. The only way to effect change is to be an agent of change. We need people involved in the process. I have been very surprised at the apathy of the younger physicians in our community. There is virtually no involvement. In five to ten years it will be their baby. They are going to have to deal with Hillary Care and a host of other issues coming down the road. If they don't plant the seeds now and put on a show of force, they are doomed. (You can insert your own excuse here to rationalize why you don't become more involved... kids, golf, knitting.) As one of my priest friends told me, "Speak now or forever hold your peace". In a few years I will have little sympathy for the whining and dumbfounded looks when a national health plan is put into place virtually uncontested. Only 33% of docs belong to the AMA, not a very powerful lobbying force on the national scene.

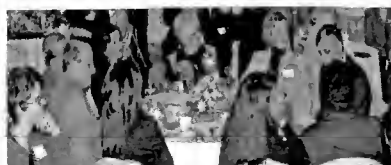
So, as I leave office, I salute and give a heartfelt thanks to the people who are out there fighting for what they believe in, and working for the greater good of the medical profession. To resurrect a previous quote of mine to those of you who are not involved, "don't expect Ted Kennedy to throw you a life preserver when you fall into a quagmire of government-controlled healthcare". Enjoy that new minimum wage they are coming out with. Oh yeah, I forgot, the Democrats are in charge now — it's called a living wage.

I'll tell you what I tell 75% of the patients who come into my office for musculoskeletal pain
.....JUST MOVE!!! Do something!

They won't have Ron Yarab to kick around any more



2007 ANNUAL MEETING BUTLER INSTITUTE



WORKSHOPS SCHEDULED FOR MAY AND JUNE

ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS AND VENDOR SHOW

Mark Thursday, May 31, 2007, on your calendar to attend this important workshop in the morning and then see what vendors have to offer in the afternoon. Last year's program on EMR was very well-received, and attendees asked for a follow up program, so here it is!

The morning workshop will focus on identifying what your practice needs in an EMR system, what you can expect, pitfalls and barriers to watch for, and how to avoid mistakes that lead to de-installation of EMR. Mark Norris of Technology Now will once again be the presenter, providing a neutral, unbiased and balanced program.

Over 30 EMR vendors have been invited to participate in the afternoon vendor show. Vendors will be able to demonstrate their programs and tell you about the advantages to each. Armed with the knowledge you gain in the morning workshop, you will be able to view these demonstrations from an informed and educated point of view.

This program will benefit physicians, practice managers, business managers and staff members who have a direct role in selecting, implementing and using EMR in the physician office.

The EMR workshop and vendor show will be held at Antone's Banquet Center, 8578 Market Street, Boardman. Members will receive registration information for this program, as well as a list of participating vendors, in April.

ANNUAL OSHA UPDATE

The Annual OSHA Update will be held on Thursday, June 21, 2007, at Antone's Banquet Center, 8578 Market Street, Boardman. The half-day program will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m., continental breakfast, and the program from 9:00 a.m. until 11a.m.

This year's presenter will be Jim Parks, President of Accu-Medical Waste Services. Many of you have met Jim when he called on you for your medical waste pick-up needs. If you haven't already signed up for this money-saving member benefit, you will be able to do so at the OSHA workshop.

MCMS members will receive registration information for the OSHA workshop in May.

TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THE PATIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

If you haven't done so already, and even if you have and haven't acted on it, take a look at the Patient Satisfaction Survey on the OSMA website, www.osma.org.

It's no surprise that 96% of our members cite malpractice risk as a high or very high concern. What may be a little surprising is that there is a strong correlation between patient satisfaction and malpractice risk, and most practices don't have the resources to address the issue in a systematic way.

The patient satisfaction survey tool helps practices measure and manage patient satisfaction in several areas, such as ease of scheduling, waiting time, interaction with the physician and responsiveness of the staff. What do you get? Reduced risk, increased patient satisfaction, greater insight into your practice operation, benchmarking against other, like-practices -- and it's all free to Mahoning County Medical Society and OSMA members.

If you would like to learn more, or talk to someone about signing up for this program, call Karyn at the MCMS at 330-533-4880.

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In Memoriam

Gust N. Boulis

July 13, 1927 - October 23, 2006

John Politis

January 29, 1947 - November 3, 2006

2007 SOCIETY EVENTS AIMED AT BOOSTING ATTENDANCE

In an effort to attract more members to Society meetings, Council has scheduled a number of "events" throughout 2007. Beginning with a change of venue for the Annual Meeting, held at the beautiful Butler Institute of American Art, and continuing with the Society and Alliance Annual International Dinner on March 30th, this year's calendar includes a Family Night at the Mahoning Valley Scrappers and *Disney on Ice* for the kids, as well as a violin concert to benefit breast cancer research and the Trans Siberian Orchestra for the "grown-ups". More events may be added throughout the year, so if you have an idea or a suggestion, please don't hesitate to let the Society know. A current listing of events appears to the right.

2007 MCMS EVENT CALENDAR

Friday, March 30, 2007

*International Dinner,
Youngstown Country Club*

Friday, June 22, 2007

*Family Fun Night with the
Mahoning Valley Scrappers*

September (TBA)

YSU Tailgate Party

Saturday, October 6, 2007

*Violin Concert to benefit
breast cancer, Ford Family Recital Hall*

November (TBA)

Trans-Siberian Orchestra

December (TBA)

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